



Strategic Directions Update

June 2021

Background

On January 13, 2021, County Council adopted the 2020-2022 Oxford County Strategic Plan (CS 2021-01), which set out Council's Strategic Directions for the balance of its four-year term of office.

This report card provides an overview of the frequency with which those strategic directions were referenced in staff reports to date in 2021.

2020-2022 Strategic Plan Refresh

VISION: Vibrant communities, working well and growing stronger together!

MISSION: To serve the needs and advance the collective interests of our partner communities, residents and businesses through services that improve community wellbeing.

VALUES: excellence, accountability, innovation, integrity, and teamwork

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

A County that *works together*

A County that *is well connected*

A County that *thinks ahead and wisely shapes the future*

A County that *informs and engages*

A County that *performs and delivers results*

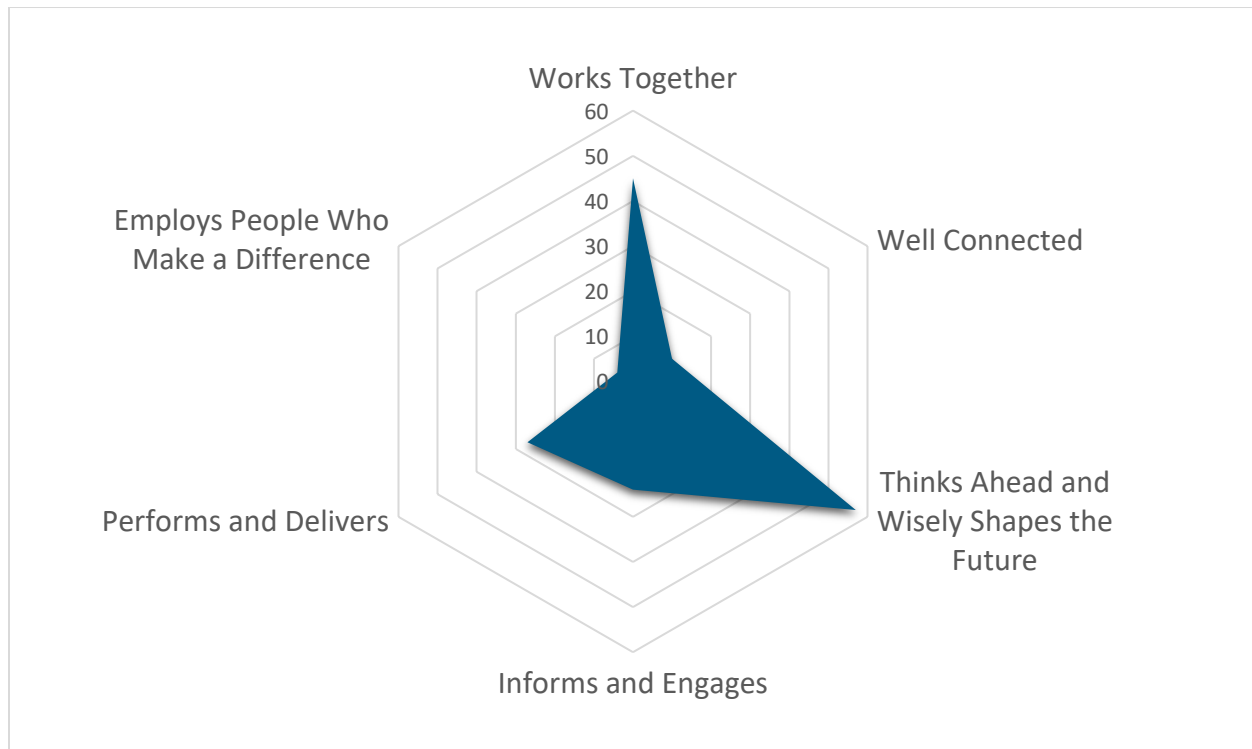
A County that *employs people who make a positive difference*

Analysis

The 2020-2022 Oxford County Strategic Plan provides a framework to guide priority setting and decision making for County Council and staff and is composed of six strategic directions that are related to working together, being well connected, thinking ahead and wisely shaping the future, informing and engaging, performing and delivering results, and employing people who make a positive difference. For each strategic direction, a number of directives (34 in total) are identified.

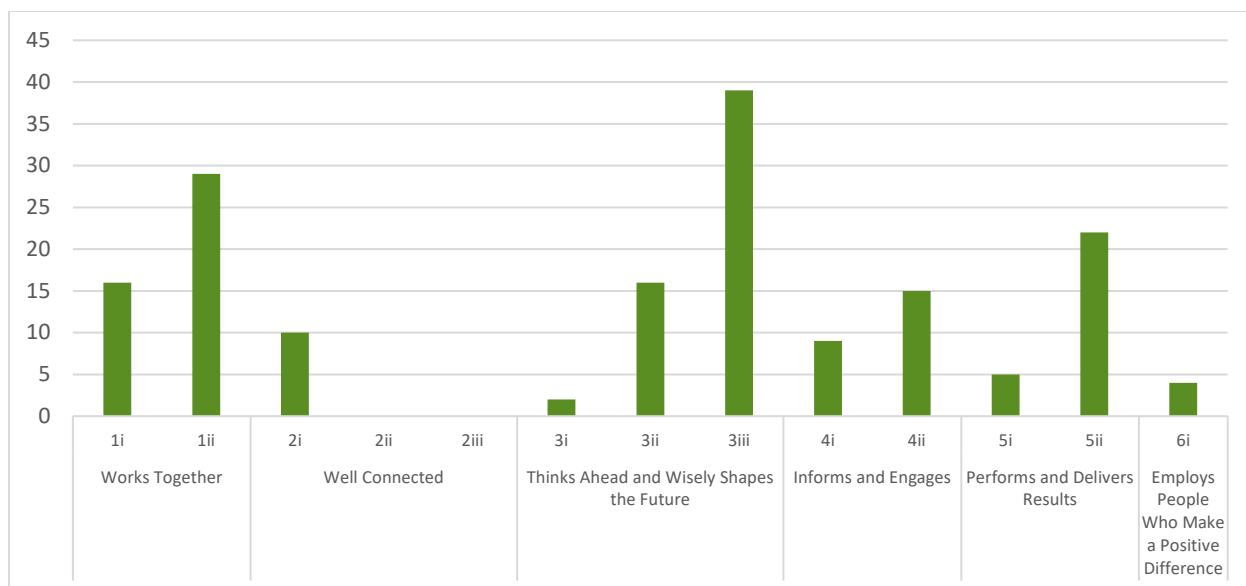
To understand the extent to which each of the directions and directives are being addressed through staff reports, the Office of the CAO undertakes a review and records the number of times each of the directions and directives are referenced. Data is gathered from reports that are presented at each Council meeting.

The radar graph below illustrates the total number of times that each of the six Strategic Directions were referenced in staff reports between January 13 and June 9, 2021 (a total of 167 references). While all six Strategic Directions are represented, staff reports referenced 'Thinks Ahead and Wisely Shapes the Future' most frequently, followed by 'Works Together', and 'Performs and Delivers'.



The difference in the number of references can be, in large part, attributed to the clarification of how directions and directives were referenced in staff reports and a continued understanding of how to apply these references. The new practice of tracking and reporting on the Strategic Directions started in January of 2021.

The bar graph below shows the number of times each of the directives were referenced in 2021.



The three most frequently referenced Strategic Directions to date in 2021 are:

Thinks Ahead and Wisely Shapes the Future (3iii) – Demonstrate a commitment to community wellbeing and sustainability.

Reports that came forward include:

- Development Charges Review and Update
- Modernization Funding Proposals
- Long-Term Renewable Energy Plan

Works Together (1ii) – Enhance community wellbeing.

Reports that came forward include:

- Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program
- Affordable Housing Project at 738 Parkinson Road
- Homelessness in Oxford County
- Speed Safety and Road Management Review

Performs and Delivers Results (5ii) – Deliver exceptional services.

Reports that came forward include:

- COVID-19 Financial Update
- Business Plan and Budget Review
- 2020 Annual Waste Management Report

The three least frequently referenced Strategic Directions to date in 2021 are:

Is Well Connected (2iii) – Strengthen community access to Internet / broadband connectivity

Is Well Connected (2ii) – Advocate for federal and provincial support for freight and passenger rail enhancements for Southwestern Ontario (as outlined in the SouthwestLynx Plan and associated reports)

Thinks Ahead and Wisely Shapes the Future (3i) – Influence federal and provincial policy with implications for the County by:

- Advocating for fairness for rural and small urban communities
- Advocating for human and health care services
- Enhancing coordination with Southwestern Ontario advocacy groups

While these results prompt worthwhile discussion on the general nature of the County's work during 2021, there are some limitations:

- COVID-19 resulted in staff activities that may not have resulted in a staff report directly linked to the Strategic Plan; however, much work was undertaken to address the pandemic that aligns with multiple Strategic Directions;
- There is a high volume of reports throughout the year from certain Departments (Public Works, Corporate Services) given the nature of the County's mandate; therefore references to the 'Thinking Ahead' and 'Working Together' Strategic Directions logically rise to the top, with Public Works having many long-term capital works and Corporate Services collaborating with local area municipalities on multiple strategic and operational initiatives;
- Because some Strategic Directions are broad-natured, they correlate with a high number of reports; and,
- Other Strategic Directions are more specific and thus have a limited number of reports linked to them.

Staff have been engaged in a multitude of operational activities in 2021 that advance Council's Strategic Directions that have not required a staff report, including, but not limited to:

A County that *works together*

- Joint Service Delivery Review completion
- Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan
- Tillsonburg Housing Action Coalition

A County that is *well connected*

- SWIFT implementation
- North Oxford public transportation
- Oxford County Cycling Master Plan
- ROMA delegations advocating for freight and passenger rail enhancements

A County that *thinks ahead and wisely shapes the future*

- ROMA delegations advocating for human and health care services (Paramedics, Long-Term Care)
- Zero Poverty Plan refresh
- Future Oxford Partnership recruitment

A County that *informs and engages*

- Participation in multiple existing community tables (Situation Table, Oxford Housing Action Collaborative, etc.)
- Consultation with specific stakeholder groups such as the Norwich Cycling Committee to develop the Norwich-to-Tillsonburg rail trail
- Area Municipal and County CAO meetings
- Speak Up, Oxford! Opportunities (Summer construction, 2022 Budget)

- 40+ updates, news releases, and public notices

A County that *performs and delivers results*

- Joint Service Delivery Review completion
- Ongoing provision of legislated services (Ontario Works, Waste Management, Community Planning, etc.)
- Ongoing Paramedic Services' COVID-19 response (including setting up a PPE Distribution hub)
- Ongoing Long-Term Care (Woodingford Lodge) COVID-19 response

A County that *employs people who make a positive difference*

- COVID-19 health and safety protocols
- Oxford Grows staff development
- ACE Awards
- Extended Management Team Personality Dimensions Workshop
- Ongoing recruitment

In addition to delivering all of our ongoing programs and services, there is also valuable work being done at the County which is not captured in staff reports. Efforts to enhance relationships and build partnerships and stakeholder networks within Oxford and beyond are on-going. One example of this is the degree of involvement that senior staff have in a wide variety of local, provincial and national groups. This type of involvement extends to staff at all levels of the County that belong to professional organizations and contribute in meaningful ways. While not always captured through the staff reporting process, this work addresses Council's Strategic Directions and is of benefit to the County.